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A month In The Cotton Districts Near Bombay

By

W. C. Siller

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INTRODUCTION.

In preparing for publication the following record of my visit to the cotton district about Barsee, my object has been merely to lay before the reader the facts which came under my actual observation, and such thoughts as these facts naturally suggested. My visit was but a short one, and on that account I can afford to put down everything that I remember without wearying the reader; and if some of the incidents appear unimportant, or trivial, they may at least be by chance useful, as the straws which show how the wind blows.

As this record will be read, in all probability, only by those who take an interest in the question of an abundant supply of cotton from India, it would be superfluous in me to dwell at any length on the causes which have combined to bring the question so prominently forward,—they must be well known. I shall only say that, in my own opinion, the importance of the crisis cannot well be overestimated.

For many years past there has been a fear of a cotton famine. In the year 1857 it was very nearly upon us, but was providentially averted by the panic which occurred that year.

The alarm, however, was not forgotten, and its fruits were seen in the Cotton Supply Association, which took its rise in that crisis.

The phantom which was laid in 1857, however, again threatens us, and it will be well indeed if England escapes this time as she did last. The crisis, however, has become so serious that it cannot safely be left in the hands of

Manchester men, for past experience shows us that immediately the pressure is removed private interest supersedes all questions of public policy; and those countries which are so earnestly entreated to assist in furnishing supplies in the event of a recurrence of the scarcity, suffer severely through their merchants for their credulity. The heavy losses that Bombay endured by the fall in cotton, which took place without interruption from March 1859 to July 1860, were quite enough to discourage any further attempts on her part to be public-spirited, as she knows from bitter experience that so long as Manchester can get one pound of American cotton, East India is at a discount far beyond what its real merits justify. In the present instance, however, the question becomes a national one, and in order to provide for the millions who are dependent for their livelihood upon the cotton trade prompt action on the part of Government became necessary. Lord Canning felt the gravity of the crisis, and published his excellent order as follows—

SUPPLY OF INDIAN COTTON TO ENGLAND.

Home Department, the 28th February 1861.

Resolution.—His Excellency the Governor-General in Council has had under his consideration the possibility of a greatly and suddenly increased demand for Indian cotton in England, and he desires to draw the attention of each Local Government within the territories of which cotton-producing and cotton-exporting districts lie to those measures whereby the power of India to meet such increased demand for cotton may be augmented by help of Government.

It is to be observed :—

First.—That no measure which places Government in the position of the private capitalist, cultivator, or speculator, or which in any way interferes with private enterprise, can be otherwise than permanently injurious in itself and detrimental to the object in view.

Therefore all attempts to stimulate cultivation or labor, by any exertion of Government authority, directly or indirectly, are out of the question.

The same objection will apply to model farms and experimental cultivation conducted by officers of Government.

Secondly.—No measure will meet the object immediately in view unless it shall tell on the production of cotton during the next season, and on our means of getting that season's crop to port. This limitation will exclude from present consideration such projects as railways or canals, which, although the surest permanent means of increasing our power of export, could be made to tell to only a very limited degree on the exports of the next few seasons. Moreover, the attention of Government is already directed to promote these works to the utmost extent compatible with its financial means, and even so serious a calamity as an apprehension of a short supply of cotton in England could hardly add to the desire of the Government of India to advance them as rapidly as possible.

The question for consideration is, what can the Government do towards facilitating an immediate increase of production, and towards improving the means of bringing the produce to port?

As to increasing production.

The solution of questions connected with the tenure of land, and with the Law regarding contracts for the delivery of agricultural produce, which are now under the consideration of Government, may ultimately produce a very considerable effect on the investment of European capital in the cotton districts, but the result could not be immediate. More probably an immediate increase of the coming crop of cotton will depend on the rapidity with which information regarding the demand and prices in England can be communicated to the producers in the cotton districts, and on the removal of all impediments to intimate and rapid communication between those who grow or collect the cotton in the interior, and the merchants who export it from the port of shipment. Directly and indirectly the Government may do something to promote these objects, especially if agents of the mercantile community of our ports will visit the cotton-producing districts, and do all that may be effected by personal intercourse to reduce the number of hands through which the produce must pass between the place of production and the place of shipment. There is also much valuable statistical information regarding the extent of cotton cultivation, which it may be in the power of the Government officers to furnish from the public records, or to verify when obtained through other means.

The operation, in the interior, of the capitalists at our sea-port towns may be facilitated by affording them the aid

of the Government Treasury in their banking arrangements in those parts of the country where as yet no private banks have been established. The agents of respectable firms at the Presidency towns might be permitted, under certain rules, to have their bills on the Presidency cashed at the Government Treasuries, paying no more premium than the actual cost of conveying the coin. This, without entailing expense on Government, might often prove a convenience to the merchants.

As to improving the means of bringing the produce to port.

It is by facilitating existing means of communication, even though it be in a rough way, that Government can best aid the merchant promptly without exceeding its legitimate functions.

Projects for bridged and metalled roads are not practicable within the next year or eighteen months; but there is a great extent of country capable of producing cotton, which is now not easily accessible to ordinary country carts, even during the fair season; and probably it is by improving the present country cart and pack bullock tracks, and thus extending the mileage over which an ordinary load of cotton may be conveyed at a rate of two and a half or three miles per hour, that the export of the next season's crop may be most effectually aided.

In this view the Governor-General in Council requests that each Local Government will at once take measures to have the lines of traffic between their cotton-producing districts and the port of shipment, whether on sea or river, examined and reported on by a competent officer. This officer should note, in general terms, the extent and probable cost of any improvements required to bring the existing country cart tracks up to the standard just described. For the execution of the improvements the Government should select the nearest Executive authority as the one to be charged with the work, and where there is no such authority at hand, a special agency should be employed for the purpose; the only conditions being that the work to be undertaken should be capable of immediate execution.

For such purposes officers of high scientific attainments as Engineers are not needed. An officer of judgment and energy, with a capacity for rapidly estimating the probable cost of the very simple works required, will be almost as useful as an accomplished Engineer. In the event of any expenditure being required, which it is beyond the power of the Local Government to sanction, application should be made to the Government of India for a special grant.

It would be very desirable that the officers employed to examine and report should be accompanied each by a member of whatever commercial community may be most interested in the produce of the district, who might observe and report on any obstacles other than physical, which may appear to impede the cotton trade. The combined report of two such gentlemen, if well selected, would furnish information of considerable practical value regarding any province in which they might be employed.

The Government of India will be prepared to bear the charge of the travelling expenses of any gentlemen who might be deputed by commercial communities to accompany its officers.

It is not intended to discourage, on the part of those who may be engaged as above described, suggestions of any extensive or costly work which may promise to subserve, in a larger and more permanent manner, the great object in view even though it may not admit of speedy execution, or be within the means of Government to sanction immediately.

Ordered, that a copy of this Resolution be communicated to the Governments of Madras and Bombay; to the Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal, the North-Western Provinces, and the Punjab; to the Commissioners of Pegu, Nagpore and Mysore; and to the Resident at Hyderabad.

Ordered further, that the Local Governments and Administrations be requested to communicate a copy of the Resolution to the commercial communities at their chief towns, through the Chambers of Commerce, or, otherwise with an invitation of any suggestions which may occur to those practically interested, and which may aid more effectually to attain the great national object in view.

W. GREY,

Secretary to the Government of India.

In accordance with this notification the Chamber of Commerce intimated to the Government that I was prepared to accompany their officer on the proposed tour through the cotton districts, and Captain Anderson was named to me as my fellow traveller. Why this arrangement fell through is explained in the letter of Government to that officer, in which it is stated that he had something

better to do,—a fact, which considering the lateness of the season and the important duties which he was performing, I should be sorry to deny. The correspondence with Government I shall give at length in the following pages, and leave my readers to form their own deductions from it. From the tenor of the above notification it was evident that the representative of the mercantile community was only to accompany the Government official to point out any obstacles which occurred to him, *other than physical.* It was evidently never the intention of Government to make the tour exclusively that of a mercantile man, and that the real benefit to be derived from it would be, as the Government expresses, the combined reports of such persons.

In the year 1851 or 1852 I had an opportunity, which rarely falls to a merchant, of visiting the cotton regions from Gogo northward through Dolka, Dundocka, Dollera, Ahmedabad, and then southward through Baroda, Broach, and Surat to Bombay; and the tour though but one of pleasure and not on business, made a profound impression upon me, and made me long for an opportunity of visiting other of the cotton districts of India. With such ideas, then, I at once accepted the invitation of the Chamber of Commerce, and commenced preparations for my journey.

Unfortunately, however, the routine inseparable from any Government measure required day after day to pass, and we quietly subsided into the hot weather with the sure prospect of a speedy fall of rain; at the same time, owing to the advanced season, the cotton-dealing population had sent their produce down, and the process could not on that account be observed by me. Previously to this I had had a private conversation with Colonel Walter Scott upon the subject, and I suggested to him the advisability of putting the question to a practical test by engaging in

an actual transaction. The consequence of the conversation was my writing the letter of which the following is a copy :—

FROM W. C. SILLAR,
Representative of the Chamber of Commerce in the proposed Commission to the Cotton Districts,

TO COLONEL SCOTT.

Bombay, 8th April 1861.

SIR,—I beg leave to submit the following proposition with a view to obtaining correct information regarding the produce of the cotton districts, and the difficulties in the way of its conveyance to Bombay, viz :

2. That an actual transaction be entered into in each of the districts which I shall be called upon to visit, the particulars of which, from its commencement to its close, shall be under the superintendence of the chief Government officer of the district, and these particulars carefully noted to stand as an authentic Government record.

3. Of course the Government would not of itself engage in such a transaction; but, as a merchant, I shall be happy to take the risk of the operation upon myself, and be content if I can lay down the cotton in Bombay at the current rates there.

4. As it would be entered into with this view and without the expectation of any profit, I should like to have the benefit of the Government servant's establishment, so that the record might be a perfectly trustworthy one.

5. The record would consist of facts only, such as

1. The price of the cotton.
2. The usual allowances made by the seller.
3. The expense of preparing for transit.
4. The cost of and time occupied in every stage of the route.
5. A record of any mishap to it on the way, owing to defective roads, nullahs, or other causes.
6. The actual weight at the commencement of the journey.
7. Do. do. do. at its close.
8. Its value in the Bombay market.
9. Do. in Manchester ascertained by sample sent, or by the bulk.
10. A general report of its fitness for manufacturing purposes as a substitute for American cotton.

6. To render all these reliable it would be requisite to have a trustworthy man to accompany it on its way to guard against substitution and robbery.

7. This would be the more necessary as I should, as much as possible, select the finer qualities of cotton for this trial.

8. I should like to have the assistance of the Government treasuries at the districts, and for any sums I should require therefrom I shall previously give in Bombay approved security.

9. In submitting this proposition I shall only add that, in my opinion, an authentic record of a real transaction, especially in such a matter as the 4th clause of para. No. 5, viz.: the time occupied in traversing each stage of the road and the expence of it, would be a most practical guide to assist in devising means for lessening cost of these.

I have the honor to remain,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
W. C. SILLAR.

Several days again passed when I received a letter asking what route I intended to take. I must say this question took me rather by surprise as I had never understood that I had anything to do with the choice of a route. On receipt of this I waited on the Chairman of the Chamber, and subsequently on Colonel Walter Scott, and was advised to proceed to Poona for the purpose of completing my arrangements, and then waiting for the reply from Colonel Davidson, Resident at Hyderabad, from whom, probably, would be received the name of some officer acquainted with the district, who would accompany me so far as his local knowledge of the district extended, and then hand me over to some one else.

Colonel Davidson's reply I received at Barsee Road, and the following are copies of the letters on the subject :—

No. 2110 OF 1861.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

To W. C. SILLAR, Esquire,
Post Office, Sholapoor.

SIR,—I am directed by His Excellency the Governor in Council to forward, for your information, copies of a letter from the Resident at Hyderabad, No. 650, dated 29th ultimo, and of its

accompaniments, in regard to affording such assistance as you may require on your arrival in the Berar districts, and to the cultivation, &c., of cotton in the Hyderabad Assigned Districts.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
M. J. S. STEWART,
Under-Secretary to Government.

Bombay Castle, 2nd May 1861.

No. 650 OF 1861.

FROM LIEUT.-COL. CUTHBURT DAVIDSON, C. B.,
Resident at Hydrabad.

To the Under-Secretary to Government,
REVENUE DEPARTMENT,
Bombay.

CIVIL DEPARTMENT.

Dated Hydrabad, 29th April 1861.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 1979, of the 25th instant, and of its enclosures, and to forward for your information copy of one this day addressed to the Commissioner of the Hydrabad Assigned Districts in regard to affording Mr. Sillar such assistance as he may require on his arrival in the Berar districts.

2. I take this opportunity of enclosing copy of a paper of Queries received from the Manchester Cotton Supply Association, and of reply sent thereto relative to the cultivation, &c., of cotton in the Hydrabad Assigned Districts.

Major Cowper is at present at Booldanah, about 50 miles due north-west from Jaulnah.

I have the honor to be, &c.,
C. DAVIDSON,
Resident.

Hyderabad Residency, 29th April 1861.

GENERAL No. 649 OF 1861.

DEPARTMENT No. 153.

To MAJOR T. A. COWPER,
Commissioner H. A. D.

CIVIL DEPARTMENT, FINANCIAL.

SIR,—With reference to a letter No. 1979, dated the 25th instant, from the Under-Secretary to the Government of Bombay to the address of the Resident and to its enclosures, a

copy of which has been forwarded to you direct by that authority, I am desired by Colonel Davidson to request that you will cause every assistance to be rendered to Mr. Sillar in obtaining the information he requires regarding the produce, &c., of cotton in the Berar districts.

I have &c. &c.,
HASTINGS FRASER,
Officiating 1st Assistant Resident.

For the Under-Secretary to Government,
REVENUE DEPARTMENT,
Bombay,

(True Copy.)
M. J. S. STEWART,
Under-Secretary to Government.

On receipt of Colonel Davidson's letter I wrote to the Chamber to the effect that, under these circumstances, it was evident that it was intended I should go alone, as the letter to me intimated as much, and I therefore made up my mind to go northward through Jaulnah, and join Major Cowper at Booldanah. Previously to doing so, however, I wrote to the Chamber an account of what I was doing and my reasons for taking such a step.

Having written my reasons for undertaking the tour so, at Kurda, I again wrote them my reasons for abandoning my original intention of proceeding to Jaulnah, and returning to Bombay instead. I reached Bombay on the 24th May, and the appearance of an early monsoon satisfied me that, perhaps, it was as well my original intention had not been carried out.

On the 26th April I left Bombay for Poona, but just before starting received the following communication from Government :—

No. 1981 of 1861.

Revenue Department.

To W. C. Sillar, Esquire,

Bombay.

Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, and to inform you that His Excellency the Governor in Council accepts the offer made by you to proceed on a tour for the purpose of obtaining correct information, and reporting on the subject of the produce of the cotton districts, and the difficulties in the way of its conveyance to Bombay.

2. I am, at the same time, desired to annex, for your information, a copy of my letters noted in the margin and of a Circular which has been addressed to the Collector of this Presidency.

Letter to Captain W. C. Anderson, No. 1977, dated 25th April 1861.

Letter to the Resident at Hyderabad, No. 1979, dated 25th April 1861.

3. I have the honor further to request that you will inform me if in any other point connected with your proposed journey further facilities can be given by this Government.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
M. J. SHAW STEWART,
Under-Secretary to Government.

Bombay Castle, 25th April 1861.

No. 1977 of 1861.

Revenue Department.

To Captain W. C. Anderson,

Superintendent Revenue Survey and Assessment Southern Mahratta Country and Berar.

Sir,—The Government of India, having had under their consideration the possibility of a greatly and suddenly increased demand for Indian cotton in England, have directed the attention of each local Government within the territories of which cotton-producing and cotton-exporting districts lie to certain measures whereby the power of India to meet such increased demand for cotton may be augmented by the help of Government.

2. A copy of the Resolution* of the Government of India communicated to this Government on the subject is annexed, and you will observe that, with a view to the improvement of the lines of traffic between the cotton-producing districts and the ports of shipment, it is the desire of the Government of India that measures be at once taken to have such lines of traffic examined and reported on by a competent Officer.

* Dated 28th February 1861.

3. The Government of India was informed by Telegram† that this Government proposed deputing you to inspect the districts to the south, and would endeavour to secure a mercantile gentleman to co-operate; and in reply to a reference made to the Chamber of Commerce, it has been intimated to Government that Mr. W. C. Sillar has consented to represent the Chamber on the proposed tour.

† Dated 13th March 1861.

4. Government, however, considering that you had sufficient work at present to occupy fully your time, have accepted an offer made by Mr. Sillar, in a letter dated the 8th instant, of which a copy is also annexed; and I am desired to request your good offices in furtherance of the object of Mr. Sillar's enquiries and experiments.

5. Mr. Sillar, Government have been informed, proposes, in the first place, to take the rail as far as the Seena River; thence he goes to Barsi, in the direction of Oomrawutti, and then, turning west, will come down through Boorashapoor, and the Candeish cotton districts.

6. The Resident at Hyderabad has been asked to extend his aid and assistance, and a Circular has been issued to the Collectors of this Presidency to afford Mr. Sillar every assistance in the prosecution of the object he has in view, and to issue the necessary instructions on the subject to the Officers subordinate to them.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

M. J. SHAW STEWART,

Under-Secretary to Government.

Bombay Castle, 25th April 1861.

(True Copy.)

CIRCULAR.

No. 1978 of 1861.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

To the Collector of

SIR,—I am directed to forward to you a copy of the papers noted in the margin, regarding an offer made by Mr. W. C. Sillar, a merchant of this City, to proceed on a tour for the purpose of obtaining correct information, and reporting on the subject of the produce of the cotton-growing districts, and the difficulties in the way of its conveyance to Bombay, and to request that you will have the goodness to afford that gentleman every assistance in the prosecution of the object he has in view, and issue instructions on the subject to the Officers subordinate to you.

Letter from Mr. W. C. Sillar, dated the 8th April 1861.
Government letter to Captain W. C. Anderson No. 1977, dated 25th April 1861.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
M. J. SHAW STEWART,
Under-Secretary to Government.

Bombay Castle, 25th April 1861.

No. 1979 of 1861.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

To Colonel C. Davidson,
Resident at Hyderabad.

SIR,—With reference to the Resolution of the Government of India of the 28th February last,* I am directed to enclose copies of letters, as noted in the margin, and to request that you will extend to Mr. Sillar such aid and assistance as he may stand in need of.

From Mr. Sillar, dated 8th April 1861.
To Capt. Anderson, No. 1977, dated 25th April 1861.
To Collectors, No. 1978, dated 25th April 1861.

2. A copy of this letter has been sent to Captain Cowper.

I have the honor to be, &c.,
M. J. S. STEWART,
Under-Secretary to Government.

Bombay Castle, 25th April 1861.
(True copy.)

* Regarding the supply of Indian cotton to England. (Copy also forwarded by the Government of India to the Resident at Hyderabad.)

I had received from Colonel Walter Scott maps of the country with the line of railway filled in, a letter of introduction to Mr. Alexander Gray, the Collector of Sholapore, and from the Chamber of Commerce 10 barrels of American cotton seed, which, by the way, were so badly secured that I had to leave some of them to be repaired before they could be considered capable of standing the rough usage of country travelling.

The break that occurs at the ghaut gives one an excellent opportunity of comparing the old and the new systems of traffic, and observing the marked contrast between the well-ordered and neatly packed railway van and the wretched rickety bullock cart. The idea of having to break up the former and commit its contents to the tender mercies of the latter is a painful one, but there is every reason to believe such will not be requisite for much longer.

In the train between Khandalla and Poona I fell in with an old fellow traveller of mine during an overland journey for England,—Captain W., Executive Engineer of the Poona district. From him I learned that the railway by no means absorbs all the traffic; but he accounts for preference being given to the old mode of conveyance, by the objection natives have to the moving and removing from train to cart and back again at the ghauts. This may be the case, but I am more inclined to attribute it to an indirect advantage which the cartmen give to the agent of the cotton dealer, and which is not obtainable from the Railway Company.

In subsequent conversations with railway employés I learnt that it is chiefly in the seed trade that the preference is given to the road rather than the rail; but the reason for this is I believe for the purpose of adulterating the seed at Panwell.

This evil is a great one, and no doubt there are many

members of the Chamber who could enlighten us further on the subject.

There is an independent native who has a territory between Khandalla and Poona of the extent of 1200 square miles or thereabouts. His name is Punt Soochoo, and his land is for the most part black soil well adapted to cotton cultivation. Some time since he received from Government some American cotton seed, but from some unexplained cause there were no results. Captain W. undertook to convey to him one of the casks I had with me, and present it to him in the name of the Chamber of Commerce, with a request that he would furnish a report of the success or otherwise attending the cultivation.

I reached Poona at daylight on the 27th, and made the best of my way to the bungalow of my friend Lieutenant B. The shigram which I engaged for the purpose lost its wheel, however, on the road, and I lost the benefit of its services. The incident gave me the opportunity of forming an estimate of the intelligence of the natives of Poona of the lower class, and the impression was not favorable. Having found the house that was pointed out to me as belonging to Lieutenant B., the servant reported that the sahib was not in, upon which I asked whether the madam sahib was at home. He denied positively that any lady lived in that bungalow, upon which I asked him his master's name, and he couldn't tell. Upon being asked whether any ladies lived in any of these bungalows, he could only tell of one and she was black and was dead.

I happened at that minute to see a servant with a pretty European child, and judging that the child must have a mamma I asked the man its name, and the answer I got was "Missy Baba:" of any further name belonging to the child or its parents he knew nothing. And it did

strike me at the time that if this was a specimen of the native, enlightened by a residence in an English establishment, what information was it probable I should get when I came to cross-question the agricultural population, for it is generally admitted, I think, that the "chaw bacon is duller than the town labourer."

Sunday, 28th.—I had the pleasure of hearing a most eloquent discourse from the Revd. Mr. ———— at Poona Church, in the course of which he gave it as his opinion that the shortest way to ameliorate the condition of the ryots was the establishment of an institution similar to the Jewish year of Jubilee. He evidently had no very exalted opinion of the Marwarries, for he remarked that their avarice and extortion so stamped their features that in meeting them in the Bazaar their ugliness frightened one.

The heat in Poona was far greater than that in Bombay, the thermometer ranging about 95°, but the nights were cool. The cook I had engaged and brought from Bombay, here made the modest proposal that as it was probable that he would be too tired to cook after a day's march I had better engage two cooks. As we could not agree upon this knotty point he left me, and I had to engage another for Rs. 17 per month.

On leaving Poona for Sholapore I found the only first class carriage occupied by two invalid ladies, in consequence of which I rode most of the way in the luggage van, and derived considerable information from the guards. Along the whole line of rail there was no cotton cultivation, and, what was still more singular, although the railway traversed a country parallel with the road which was for many miles visible from it, not one single object could be seen to lead one to suppose he was in a cotton country.

As we approached Sholapore the temperature sensibly

increased, and at the Barsee road station the thermometer stood at 105° in the station house. In the carriages it was considerably higher.

During the journey I had ample leisure to criticize the general working and management of the line, and found them defective in several points.

Previously, between Bombay and Khandala I had as my travelling companion Mr. Cooper, the traffic manager of the railway; the riotous and crowded state of the platforms was the subject of our conversation, when he informed me that it was the intention of the Company to introduce the French system both as regards passengers and luggage. My own impression is that such an introduction would be beneficial so far as second, third, and fourth class passengers are concerned, but that it is unnecessary as regards first, the number of such travellers being very limited, and their position as such giving them the right to the freedom of the platform.* It must also be borne in mind that a system cannot with propriety be considered applicable to one country because it succeeded in another, unless the various other branches of management are similar. Now, on the French Railways every convenience in the way of refreshment, &c. can be had at the stations on the line, and if the traveller is tired or unwell he can stop, and break his journey. Not so on an Indian line. His food and all his creature comforts must accompany him.

I am not one of those who advocate the principle that because there is a railway, the trains must go at express speed. No doubt there will be such trains when there is sufficient first class traffic to warrant the expense, but a passenger who has been carried across a country at 15 or 20 miles an hour has good reason to complain when he is detained at a station for twenty minutes. The thermometer cannot be far short of 110° in a first class railway

carriage ; detention under such circumstances is most annoying. And I have never yet observed any reason for it that could not be obviated by a few more railway porters, or a little more punctuality on the part of the engine drivers. At the stations we want porters, and not porters only but porters who can be recognized as belonging to the Company. No others should be admitted upon the platform, gratuities should be abolished and prohibited. At the Poona station there was a regular block upon the platform, because the one coolie who had received pay for distribution amongst the gang employed to bring one officer's luggage had not made that distribution fairly. Not the porters only but every railway official should have his uniform, and be obliged to wear it, so as to be recognizable as such. The call for water is incessant, and the ill-arranged system of supplying this want goes far to obstruct the legitimate business of the platform. Passengers are entitled to have their convenience consulted even though they are only 3rd class ones, and this could be very greatly done by a simple contrivance of having a cistern in each carriage for water. Caste-men might object to this, but let those who wish for it have the power of getting it. Passengers have a very legitimate cause of complaint in the fact that throughout the whole route from Poona to Sholapore there are no waiting rooms for ladies. Invalid ladies do travel by rail, and in a journey occupying 11 hours that such a want should exist is most disgraceful.

Another class of men, however, must have also some consideration from the railway authorities. I am given to understand that the engine-drivers are much overworked. Now considering the importance of their posts this ought not to be. I believe the driver gets good extra pay for extra work, but pay will not enable an English constitu-

tion to stand against over-work in such a climate as this. The station masters have not their convenience consulted as they ought, the accommodation provided for an English man and his wife is certainly short of what it ought to be, and as I before remarked, considering the importance of the duties they have to perform and the responsibility resting on them, they deserve better treatment. Their work demands their attention day and night, and I believe that on the Sunday also the goods trains are prepared. This should not be.

At Barsee road station I deposited all my luggage, tents, &c. and proceeded to Sholapore for the purpose of meeting with Mr. Gray, the Collector of the district, but hearing that he was likely to be found at a village called Warree I stopped at that station, and engaged a chance bullock cart to convey me to the village, when I found the Collector's tent in a pretty clump of trees near a Fort and temple of considerable pretensions. I remained with him there the remainder of the day, and early next morning he struck his tents, and we rode over to Barsee road station or Koordoo as the village is called.

Here I waited until I received the instructions from Colonel Davidson at Hyderabad, and meantime I learned that in the Sholapore Collectorate the districts adjoining the railway produce but very little cotton.

Two are North of the line of Railway.

Kurmulla has 8000 acres in cotton cultivation.
Barsee „ 4000 „ „ „

12,000

Three are South of it, and adjoining the line.

Marah	10,000	acres.
Mohul	3,000	„
Sholapore	10,000	„
	23,000	

Beyond these again and further South are the remaining four districts.

Indee	18,000	acres.
Hyperga	37,000	„
Mungoli	34,000	„
Modibahal	59,000	„
	148,000	

It is remarkable that of these nine districts in two only, and those the extreme south, has cotton cultivation been extended during the last year. Mungoli and Modibahal have 26,000 acres more in cotton cultivation this year than they had last, whilst the other seven have 17000 acres less. Of the state of the roads in the collectorate and the sums required to improve them, Captain Goodfellow has already reported, and his report is no doubt available. In addition to the heat here there was a dry scorching wind like the blast from the mouth of a furnace, under the influence of which my ink dried up, and the ivory haft of my penknife split and started from the metal. Whilst waiting at Barsee road I walked along the various roads in the neighbourhood, and found them though certainly capable of improvement decidedly superior to anything I had seen in Guzerat.

I met here the station master of Sholapore. In company with him I inspected the cotton bags on the station.

These had come from		
Barsee	18	miles.
Purlee	80	„
Gungakeer	100	„
Rajpool	80	„
Hingolee	150	„
Omree	160	„
Kirkullee	165	„
Mais talooka	200	„
Vismut	120	„
Omrawuttee	400	„
Karanja	350	„
Moodul	200	„

Of these the Mais talooka and Moodul were the best. No two were alike—and of all, Barsee itself was the worst. The whole of the cotton will be sold in Bombay no doubt as Barsee cotton, and what wonder is there therefore at the irregularity which such cotton exhibits. But the names of these places convey no accurate idea of the locality, so many villages bear the same name.

Conversing with the natives I met at the station in charge of consignments of cotton, I went deeply into the question of cost, transit, expenses and loss in weight, but the answers to my queries were so irreconcilable with each other, that I was forced to the conclusion that they knew nothing about it, or if they did, they saw no reason why they should enlighten a sahib on the subject. One said that Rs. 20 per candy would cover transit and packing, and that he was satisfied if he got 8½ maunds at Barsee for 10½ despatched from the fields.

About 30 carts arrived whilst I was there. There is seldom a press of business unless carts accumulate on the other side of the Seena owing to rain. 4000 dokras or about 600 bales could be forwarded in one day.

On Sunday the 5th I received the Bombay letters from Sholapore; amongst others the answer of Colonel Davidson to Colonel Walter Scott's original letter. The answer I expected was the appointment of some Government officer to accompany me in terms of the original Government notification, and such having been told me by Colonel Scott would be the probable arrangement. In this, however, I was disappointed. Colonel Davidson merely wrote to Major Cowper to render me all the aid he could, and sent me the questions put by the Cotton Supply Association and his answers thereto. Under these circumstances I resolved to lose no more time but proceed

at once by myself as, with the exception of returning to Bombay, this was the only course left for me.

On Monday morning I rode out half way to Roopla with Mr. Gray, and in the evening I ran down the line in a light lurry propelled by two men with poles and a favorable wind at about 12 miles an hour. So far as I was able to judge, the country was nearly all black soil suitable to cotton cultivation.

I received much polite attention from Mr. Hales, the station master at Koordoo. He reports the place though intensely hot not unhealthy, though he himself suffers from the effects of exposure to wet and heat when occupied laying down a secret telegraphic wire during the mutinies.

Married men, he says, are better servants than others for they have a greater pressure upon them to remain at their posts under circumstances which would make a bachelor at once tender his resignation.

Tuesday, 7th.—Having sent on overnight my tents and carts I left for the town of Barsee at daylight, on horseback, accompanied by a mounted orderly kindly placed at my disposal by Mr. Gray, that gentleman having left the day previously for Roopla. I was sorry when our routes separated, for I had had much pleasure in the short acquaintance I had made with him, and derived much useful information from his conversation. I completed the journey in three hours, but the sun at that season is so scorching, immediately he rises that unless one has undergone a previous training it is not good to be out so late in the morning.

The road from Koordoo to Barsee is a fine broad made one and though perfectly passable is yet in anything, but good repair. On my way I met with two carts in grief, one upset and lying on its side, the other minus one wheel.

Not being an engineer nor surveyor of roads I can form no idea of the annual expense required to keep this road in repair, but taking a common sense view of it I think that the expense would come to a very small toll on the traffic that passes over it. It is notorious that when once a hole is established in a road, every cart that passes bumps into that hole, and these bumps very very soon establish such a rut as would break any loaded cart. There was one real physical difficulty when the road after crossing the bed of a stream positively went up a step, the drivers assisting the bullocks by putting their own shoulders to the wheel.

On the way I passed great droves of bullocks with bags of grain on their backs driven by a race of people I should judge from the personal appearance to be Gypsies. A large proportion of them were women, their dresses gaudy, though travel stained, and covered with silver ornaments, the features hard and bold, but decidedly handsome. On my arrival at Barsee I was struck by the size and importance of the place. By means of my orderly I found the Mamlutdar, and delivered to him the Perwannah I had received from Mr. Gray. What a perwannah is I have not a very clear idea, but I took it to be a Mahratta edition of a letter of introduction and a passport combined, and as such he evidently received it, and appointed next morning to wait upon me, and to bring with him several cotton merchants.

The temperature is high and the wind scorching ; the Thermometer stands at 100 ° in the day time, but at night falls to about 75 ° if there is any wind blowing.

Here I received from Bombay letters enclosing a sum of money from the Chamber of Commerce to enable me to make the practical test I originally intended, of the expenses of transit, &c. The remittance was in Treasury bills. In Barsee, however, there was no object to be gain-

ed by such investment, the cotton was not good, and there was no difficulty or undefined obstacle to be overcome in its transit.

From my own knowledge of the cotton trade I had arrived at the conclusion that only such East India cotton was urgently wanted as could supply on an emergency the failure of American descriptions. This qualification none of the Barsee cotton possessed.

On Wednesday the 8th, at 6 A. M., I received the visit of the Mamlutdar and his friends, the principal one of whom was the Agent of the well-known Bombay cotton merchant Veerjee Nursey.

The information received from these men on points in which I had the means of checking them, I found to be inaccurate, and I therefore take it as valuable so far as it contradicts or corroborates other reports, but no further. Their report is as follows.

Barsee is a depôt for cotton rather than a cotton growing country. Cotton does grow at Barsee, but it is entirely consumed by native manufacturers. It is much inferior to that imported from other districts.

Q.—From what districts does cotton come ?

A.—It chiefly comes from the districts of Wurwull, Mais, Kundur, Amby, or from the villages of Loha, Kowtu Wurruz, Noker, Pansewdee, Julkote, Nurgeer, Oodgur, Purlee, Burdapoor, Kurpoor, Durmapooree, Sompet, Gungaker. All these are in the Nizam's Dominions, and so far as they know there is very little cotton out of them unless you go to Nassick or Oomrawuttee. They don't know what our political relations are with the Nizam, but they think the Government lent him money, and keep the country at security.

Q.—Where does the best cotton come from ?

A.—From the Mais talooka and Nandair.

Q.—How far off?

A.—About 165 miles.

Q.—How much of the good cotton comes to Barsee.

A.—I don't know.

Q.—You can surely give me idea of how much?

A.—Sometimes more, sometimes less, about 30 bales came yesterday. (Just the answer of "Missy Baba" over again.)

Q.—What is the price of cotton?

A.—The very best cotton from Mais talooka is Rs. 36 per Pulla.

Q.—What is a Pulla?

To this question I received two answers, and it demonstrates the absolute necessity there exists for having in India a standard weight.

1st Answer.—A Pulla is 3 Maunds.

2nd Answer.—3¼ Pullas = 1 Bombay Candy.

Now here is something tangible wherewith to test their accuracy. Analyze the first answer.

1 Pulla = 3 Maunds.
1 Maund = 40 Seers.
1 Seer = 80 Rupees.
1 Rupee = 180 Grains.

One pulla, therefore, weighs 17,28,000 grains or 225 lbs. avoirdupois. 3¼ of such pullas would be equal to 731¼ lbs. only, or considerably short of the Bombay Candy of 784 lbs.

This demonstrates that they are wrong somewhere; but, to endeavour to explain that they were wrong was one thing, to succeed was another. I am, however, of opinion that the former answer is the correct one, and that a Pulla is 225 lbs.

To proceed with their statement 1 pulla is worth Rs. 36.

There is an allowance of 5 seers per pulla.

There is another allowance called butta, which varies, and is in consequence of having to reduce native rupees

into Company's rupees—that at present is 5 per cent ; it is never less than one per cent.

Exchange is now 1 per cent. against the drawer on Bombay of an 11 days' sight bill.

Exchange on Sholapore is 8 as., do. do. for a sight bill.

EXPENSES.

Rs.	*as.*	*p.*	
0	4	0	per Pulla Brokerage.
0	8	0	ditto. Cartage to Koordoo or Barsee road station as the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company call it. 4 Pullahs go on one Cart and cart hire varies from Rs. 1¼ to Rs. 4 per cart.
0	10	0	per Cart— A duty taken by the Nizam on every cart that crosses the Seena—the district of Purrainda having been ceded to him, and as a strip of it runs between Barsee and Kurmulla, for the last 2 months he has levied this toll. From another source (Mr. Burstall's Agent) this toll is reported at 1½ annas on every bag. About 500 or 600 carts pass daily.
0	0	0	Weighing at the Railway being done by the G. I. P. Railway Company there is no charge on the cotton.
2	0	0	per Pulla—Railway Carriage Koordoo to Bombay. The Railway charge is 11 annas per maund, 3 of which are for carriage on the Ghauts.
3	6	0	This is = about 6¾ Rupees per Bombay Candy.

Under these circumstances Rs. 36 per pullah stands at Rs. 125 per candy of 784 lbs. in Bombay. Thus

Rs.	36	0	prime cost.	
	1	84	deduct this, being Rs.	0.0416 allowance of 5 seers.
				1.8000 Butta 5 of per cent.
	34	16		1.8416
	3	40	add this, being charges as above enumerated.	
	37	56	per pullah or estimates 3½ pullahs to a candy, Rs. 122 per candy.	

This Rs. 37.56 per Pulla is equivalent to Rs. 125 per Candy estimating the pulla at 225 lbs., and making allowance for the usual 3½ per cent. discount allowed in Bombay.

The weights used by the Barsee merchants did not much enlighten me, for they were literally stones.

Surely the Nizam's toll must be unknown to the Government, or, considering that the whole of his produce

comes through our territory without paying toll, ours might pass through his.

Thursday, 9th—Canduba, a native merchant, called, from whom I received the following report :—

Q.—What is the process of sowing your cotton here ?

A.—In March the old stocks are pulled up, and the land ploughed. 10 bullocks pull one plough, sometime 8, never less. Sometimes old rotten cow-dung is put on the land as manure, generally not so. By the end of May the ground is harrowed by a harrow and a pair of bullocks. There is then nothing to be done till seed time but to clean the cotton of last season, and carry is to market. After rain has fallen once or twice the seed is put in either by a machine, with three teeth which scratches the ground and lets the seed fall into the furrow, or else sown broadcast, the seed being mixed with earth to keep the grains separate ; it is weeded about four times.

It blooms in October, a yellow blossom red in the heart. The cotton is picked about January, not daily but once a week.

It is not soaked in water before sowing. The tops of the plants are not cut off ; when it blooms the branches are not thinned.

If the cultivator had better seed and knew what to do, no doubt he would do it.

The goats are turned into the cotton fields, they eat the tops off, and that is as good as cutting them off.

Let any one expect to receive good cotton from such farming, and yet here it is reported that in place of judiciously pruning the plant they allow goats to eat all the leaves off !

Before leaving Barsee I impressed upon the Mamlutdar the necessity of better seed being sown, and gave him instructions to supply this to any one who would apply to

him for it. This he promised to do, and Mr. Canduba undertook to forward the nine barrels I had left at Koordoo from that station to Barsee.

Whilst at Barsee I could not help reflecting upon the great difficulty presented to an enquirer by the diversities of weights and measures in use in India whether of produce, capacity, or land.

A stranger would remark, and perhaps be not over well pleased at the record of weights at the railway stations being kept in maunds and seers.

What is a maund and what is a seer?

A maund is 40 seers,
A seer is 30 oz.

The knowledge of this fact, however, does not enable me to know the weight of my "impedimenta" as those sensible fellows the ancients called it, without going through a mental calculation for which, in the confusion and glare of an Indian railway station, I have neither time nor inclination. I remember a long time ago remarking to an intelligent native on the absurdity of the Indian system of weights and measures—each district having the same terms but representing different weights. He admitted it all but retorted by saying, that in this respect they certainly would not go to Englishmen for instruction, for absurd though their system was, they were not yet so foolish as to make a hundred weight a hundred and *twelve* pounds, nor to put £ for pounds and *d.* for pence. Of course I explained that the ancient Romans—but he interrupted me by saying he knew all that, but we were not ancient Romans, and we put £ for pounds and *d.* for pence, and therefore had no reason to bully his countrymen for their maunds and seers.

I think it is to be regretted that when Government took the trouble in 1852 to endeavour to assimilate the weights

and measures of India they did not at once introduce the English pound as the standard and let the hundred weight be as its name imports 100 pounds only, and so carry the decimal principle both upwards and downwards. The difficulty of obtaining statistical information of any value is greatly increased by the want of well defined terms. Most weights take as their starting point the tola or rupee, but even here we are entirely thrown out in any calculation we make because the rupee itself is so various in its weight. Thus in the province of Guzerat alone we have

The Company's Rupee, weighing		180 grains.
Babasye	„	177 „
Broach	„	177½ „
Soortee	„	179 „
Cumbattee	„	179½ „
New Sicca	„	180¾ „
Old Sicca	unknown,	

being no less than six varieties in one district.*

There are seven varieties in the Malwa provinces. The aggregate number of varieties in the whole of India I do not care to calculate.

Next to the tola comes the seer, and the varieties of this are endless—varying from 25½ rupees to 139. After the seer comes the maund. To trace it through seers and rupees would be neither pleasant nor profitable; suffice it to say reduced to avoirdupois weight we have in Guzerat alone sixteen varieties. Measures of capacity are equally intricate, and the terms used in land measurement no better; and here I may give a practical illustration of the evil of the intricacy of it, showing how entirely it rendered useless the vast labour and expense undertaken by Government and its servants in the most useful and comprehensive

* Vide Captain Jervis' tabular statement in page 286 of the Report of the Chamber of Commerce for 1852-53.

returns, sent in from time to time to the Chamber of Commerce on the subject of cotton cultivation.

Mr. G. Plowden, Secretary to Government Revenue Department, wrote 27th September 1848 a letter, No. 295, to the Secretary to the Sudder Board of Revenue, forwarding reports from various Collectors on the subject of cotton, and amongst other things answers to the following question:—"What is the average produce of cotton per beegah or acre?" To this question there are answers from 54 places, to some of which only is the term beegah defined.

Answer No. 1.—The beegah=1 rood 12 perches and 27 furlongs; unless there is a printer's error it is a strange answer. I have understood 27 furlongs to be nearly 3½ miles, which is not probable would have been tacked on to 1 rood and 12 perches.

Answer	2.	3 Beegahs=1 English acre.	
,,	9	1 Beegah 12 cottahs = 1 English acre.	
,,	14	1 Khooba = 13 acres 2 roods 19 poles 28½ yards.	
,,	16	1 Beegah	1192 yards.
,,	17	1 ,,	4000 ,,
,,	18	1 Pokee	1920 ,,
,,	19	1 Beegah	4225 ,,
,,	20	1 ,,	3025 ,,
,,	34	1 ,,	120 feet square.
,,	36	1 Poorah = 1,19,146 English acres.	

One poorah, equal to 1,19,146 English acres, will yield 6 to 7 maunds of cotton in a favorable season.

But what is the use of going further? That may be a misprint, but who can tell; I suppose it is, for I see that the whole produce of these 119 thousand and odd acres, is 6 to 7 maunds of cotton in a favorable season vide page 157 of Chamber of Commerce report for 1852-3. From the above an idea may be formed of the utter uselessness of such statistics, and on this account that I speak in terms of the strongest condemnation of the practice of records being kept or returns made in any language but the

English language, and if upon rare occasions it is absolutely necessary to use such it should invariably be accompanied by its definition. Let me give an example of this. In page 183 of Appendix C to the Report of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce for the year 1852-53 I find the following remarks by the Commissioner of Benares in letter 235 of 16th August 1848 :—

Cost of transport.

Very different estimates have been given of the cost of transport to Calcutta * * * more carriage form only a proportion of the actual charge * * * As examples of the charges previously incurred, the information supplied by officers at some of the greater marts is here given.

Rs.	*as.*	*p.*	
0	0	3	Brokerage.
0	0	3	Weighing and porterage.
0	0	3	Packing and thread.
0	0	3	Porterage to the Ghaut.
0	0	9	Commission to the agent.
0	4	0	Boat hire and Churunder (servants in charge.)
0	9	9	Government duty and Durkhast nuvees.
0	1	6	Hoondeeun.
0	1	9	Insurance and peon.
0	1	6	Gomashta and peon.
1	4	3	

Now I call that an unsatisfactory document, *most* unsatisfactory.—Analized it stands thus—

0	1	0	Brokerage, weighing, porterage, packing, thread, and carriage to the Ghaut.
0	0	9	Commission agent.
0	1	6	Gomashta and his peon twice as much as the agent gets for commission.
1	1	0	Sundry Items.

Which items each have an undefined peon charge attached to them and nearly ½ of the whole charge or 9-9 is for a Durkhast nuvee. What on earth is a Durkhast nuvee ? It makes one feel very much, as I remember a clerk in the office of the Official Assignee did, when he was poring over an item in the ledger of the late Mr. Richmond. He brought it to me and said,

" Sir, here is written

To postage ..... Rs. 0 4 0
To sundries ..... „ 1,47,327 8 2 •

" Is'nt this very vague ?"

Well, but this Durkhast nuvee, what is it ? I asked the question of the clerk to the Collector of the Sholapore district. Here is his answer—

" Respected Sir,—Nuvees means a clerk or writer, and Durkhast nuvees will therefore mean writer of Durkhasts. I think it means a small present to persons issuing the pass notes. The term is unknown here."

I should hope it was.

This is, however, but one instance out of a thousand where important documents have their utility lessened, if not entirely destroyed, by the use of unknown or ill-defined terms ; and if Government records are to be available to Parliament, or to the English public, such terms should be banished from them altogether.

But to return to the question of weights and measures, I have only yet shewn that the present system is a most faulty one. What have Government done to rectify it? On the 19th November 1852 Government wrote their letter, 4148, to the Chamber of Commerce saying that for several years they had been endeavouring to introduce, with the consent of the people, a uniform standard of weights and measures throughout the Presidency.

They fixed upon the tola as a standard ; and though I am not prepared to admit that the selection was the best they could have made, yet they had good reasons for it and these reasons they gave in the letter above alluded to. Similarly, also, they fixed upon the seer as the standard of capacity. Several localities adopted the change, several did not, and, as in the case of Surat, their arguments were founded on common sense. The Surat traders said—Why

should we adopt the tola as the standard when you have not yourselves done so at the Presidency.

Government acknowledged the force of this argument, and invited the co-operation of the Chamber of Commerce. Application had been made to Government for a legislative enactment giving power to the supreme or local authority, from time to time, to regulate the various standards of weights and measures. In two former instances had application been made for such a law, first in 1837 and again in 1841. Their answers were very sensible. To the first they said there would be little advantage, and the hazard of infinite confusion, if we were to attempt by a compulsory law to force into uniformity that rooted variety of habit which in regard to weights and measures is found to exist throughout India.

The second reply was that any attempt to enforce uniformity would be vexatious and unsuccessful.

The Court of Directors viewed the matter in a different light, for in a despatch addressed to the Government of India in November 1848, they observed, with reference to the above remarks, that:—

"The introduction of an uniform standard seems to have "been so much needed, so useful, and so popular, that the "absence of legal authority to enforce it would appear to "be a defect which should be remedied."

A long letter from Mr. Lumsden, No. 3137 of 1851, sums up by saying that legislation is superfluous, but that all revenue officers should be steadily directed towards the simplification of existing standards so far as it can be carried out with the consent of the inhabitants themselves.

To all this the Chamber replied as follows: but with the tenor of their recommendation I do not entirely agree. The dictating how goods should be bought and sold would be a vexatious interference on the part of a Government:—

THE CHAMBER'S REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

No. 90 of 1852.

To J. G. LUMSDEN, ESQ.,

Secretary to Government, Bombay.

SIR,—I have the honor, by direction of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, to acknowledge receipt of your able and interesting letter of date the 19th ultimo, with papers therein referred to, on the subject of weights and measures throughout this Presidency.

2. The members of the Chamber have read with interest the history of the endeavours of Government to introduce a uniform system, which you have furnished, and recognize the judiciousness and moderation of all their proceedings in this matter as detailed. Indeed, if the Committee were to make any remarks of a critical nature on those proceedings, it would be that Government has only been too forbearing in the enforcement of its own just views.

3. It is among the least disputed and least disputable functions of a Government, in the opinion of the Chamber, to fix a standard of weights and measures, and to enforce the use of it in commerce, by whatever penalties are necessary for the purpose. This Chamber therefore coincides with the opinion of the Court of Directors, as specified in paragraph 19 of your letter under acknowledgment, that the absence of legal authority to enforce the use of a uniform system "appears to be a defect which should be remedied" by the promulgation of a regular law to that effect.

4. On the other hand, this Chamber would not be thought insensible to the practical difficulties in the way of enforcing a uniformity so desirable, especially where there are such varieties now existing: but those very varieties, as it seems to the Chamber, must lessen the power of resistance in any particular locality; and having in view what is practicable as well as what is desirable, the Chamber thinks the suggestion made by the Collectors of Customs and of Land Revenue the best, —that both the Indian standard, as defined by the Bengal Regulation VII. of 1833, and the English Avoirdupois, which is in common use in Bombay, either under English or Native names, should be legalised. Ample notice should be given of the time when any legislative enactment is to come into force, and every facility afforded to persons in trade for adjusting, testing, and certifying to the correctness of their weights, after which the use of all others should be declared illegal and a penal offence,—though fraud only ought to be punished severely.

5. As regards measures of capacity, the Chamber is not prepared to make any practical suggestion ; nor does it seem to them of so much consequence in commerce as that of weight. It occurs to the Committee, however, to remark that whatever measures of capacity are in most general use throughout the country, ought to be legalised as the *standard* measures, and no others recognised in Government offices, by heads of departments, or in the courts of law. A little firmness and perseverance on the part of Government would no doubt produce all the uniformity in this respect that can be expected or desired.

6. Though somewhat unconnected with the immediate subject of reference, I am directed further to urge on the Right Honorable the Governor in Council, the great desirableness of having a uniform land measure all over the country. If the Committee are rightly informed the *beega* measure is not the same in different parts of the country ; and without a uniform measure it is impossible to have any collection of reliable agricultural statistics,—an object so desirable, equally for the purposes of Government and of commerce, that the Chamber would urge it on the attention of Government for its own sake. The other numerous advantages of a uniform measure of land are too patent to require remarks at the hands of the Chamber.—I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed) JOHN CONNON,

Bombay, Chamber of Commerce, 28th December, 1852. } *Secretary.*

Whether right or wrong, the representation of the Chamber carried considerable weight with it, and in consequence an elaborate draft act was prepared by the Advocate General.

This draft act never became law, and right glad should every right-thinking person be that it did not. The Chamber, in their reply under date 11th July 1853, suggested a difficulty connected with the double pound troy avoirdupois, and in a severe criticism, conveyed in the para. 7, condemned the whole measure of Government. Government in No. 2540, 3rd August 1853, acknowledged the justice of the Chamber's criticism, and agreed to reconsider the question.

In October 1853 a new committee was appointed to the Chamber, and in their report we hear nothing whatever of the question of weights and measures, but in the year following, viz., 1854-55 the question was opened by the Madras Chamber of Commerce, and in the reply of Government to a letter from the Bombay Chamber on the subject, we learnt that under instructions from the Court of Directors the idea of applying to the legislature had been abandoned for the present. In the report of October 1857, we again find the subject revived an account of a paper from Mr. W. H. Bayley, of the Madras C. S., who seems to have been thoroughly alive to the importance of the question, but all that came of it was a *hope* that the views of the Court of Directors may have undergone change. For upwards of 12 months nothing on this subject was heard of till Government wrote to the Chamber asking them whether they had any views on the subject.

The Chamber gave the following reply :—

No. 139 of 1858.

To H. L. Anderson, Esq., Secretary to Government,
General Department, Bombay.

Sir,—In acknowledging the receipt of your memorandum No. 2465 of 1858, pressing for a reply to the reference made in May 1857 on the subject of Mr. Bayley's pamphlet respecting an uniform system of weights and measures for the whole of the British territories in India, I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber to state, that the subject has been at various times under consideration by the Members of the Chamber. Whatever difference of opinions may exist as to the merit of the suggestions made by Mr. Bayley, and the advisability of carrying them out in whole or in part at some future period, a general impression prevails that many important considerations are involved in the question besides those which refer merely to a fixing of standards of measures for India. It is, no doubt, desirable that an uniform system of weights and measures should be established, but the question is an imperial one, and regards the whole British empire ; and it would be, perhaps, unwise to advocate too hasty changes in

India, which might clash with a revised system in England. Two committees (1841 and 1854) of the House of Commons have recommended changes in standards of measure, and the substitution of stones of 14 lb., and cwts., of 112 lb., for stones of 10 lbs. and centeners of 100 lbs. It has also been suggested that a decimal system of currency should be adopted ; but up to the present time no legislation has taken place upon this important subject. So long as measures of such general importance to our vast empire remain in abeyance, it would be a bad policy to make partial or temporary alterations in the weights and measures in one of Great Britain's dependencies, especially when hopes are entertained that imperial standards may at no distant period be fixed permanently for the whole British empire. The Committee therefore think, that before entering into the considerations raised by Mr. Bayley's pamphlet, it would be desirable that the Government of India should urge on the Government in England a thorough revision of English measures and currency, and an assimilation of a complete decimal system for England and all her dependencies simultaneously.—I have the honor to be, &c.,

J. N. CROWE,
Acting Secretary,

Bombay Chamber of Commerce, 2nd December 1858.

So far has the question gone, and there it rests, and to all appearance there it is likely to rest. It is however notoriously to the advantage of every one that it should not be allowed to rest, and therefore with this view I now re-open the question, but before suggesting any plan for putters matters on a proper basis I wish to demolish the plans already suggested.

Before you can ask a man to alter his customs and habits for yours you must be able to prove that the one you wish to substitute is better. Now does this hold with the various weights and measures we wish to substitute for the seers and maunds now in use? Certainly not, the terms now in use in England were introduced when her civilisation was not much in advance of the present state of India.

What is a yard ?—3 feet.

What is an inch ?—3 barley corns.

What is an ounce ?—20 pennies' weight.

What is the weight of a penny ?—24 grains of corn.

What is the standard of agricultural produce ?—A stone.

What is land measured by ?—A pole.

Surely these are not terms so accurate in their definition that they deserve to be foisted upon the people of India.

Away with them all, say I, they were introduced in ignorance, and are only tolerated by long custom, but in principle they are wrong, in practice confusing, and so far from being desirable for introduction into India. It is every way to be hoped they will be banished from civilized England.

Covetousness, though the last evil prohibition of the 10 Commandments, is perhaps the most general failing of the human race, and this sin is the foundation of much confusion in our weights and measures.

If I buy 100 lbs. from you, you must give me 12 into the bargain. Very good. So a hundred weight became 112 lbs.

If I buy a yard from you—you must give me one inch in. Very good. So the Manchester yard is 37 inches.

If I buy 12 loaves from you—you must give me one in. Very good. Hence a baker's dozen of 13.

Now all these terms, though sanctioned by custom, are wrong in principle ; they are stamped with the word falsehood. A false weight is an abomination, and a hundred weight should be a hundred weight or 100 lbs., and no one atom more under one atom less, and so with the rest.

So far then I recommend the entire exclusion from India of English terms of any kind, be they of weight, measure, or capacity, simply because they are indefinite.

If then we are not to have the English what are we to have ?

I have no objection to the tola if you can define to me

what a tola is, but if to define a tola you must needs go to English grains I protest against it. The English weights have been, if I am rightly informed, rendered capable of an accurate definition by scientifically fixing their value. Thus for the pound Avoirdupois the standard is the weight of the contents of a cubic measure of distilled water at a certain temperature and at the level of the sea. Thus defining weights by measure. Measure is defined by reference to the length of a pendulum of a given metal at a given temperature, making a certain number of vibrations to the minute, thus bringing all the standards, whether of weight or measure, to the test of "time," which can be regulated with perfect accuracy.

If then we are not to have the English pound and yard as our standards, let us have simple ones of our own.

For measure the length of the pendulum which beats one in the second.

For capacity, the cube of ·1 or one-tenth of that.

For weight the weight of distilled water that such cube would contain, of course, under the circumstances adopted by the English tests.

Having these standards I would use no other. I would give them names different from any now in use for the purpose of avoiding confusion, and I would make every Government revenue and custom house record be kept in these terms, and no other. If, when you come to deal with large figures, tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands be found inconvenient, call them lakhs, and there you have a denomination that every one understands. It is a popular error to suppose that many figures are incumbrance to the mind. No one has any difficulty in understanding the bearing on the money market when they read that the gold in the Bank of England is 17 millions, nor of the Bombay piece goods bazaar when the exports for the

month have been 21 million yards of plain cottons. Nor the deliveries of tea in London in a month 8½ million pounds, and if even you got beyond that, hundreds of millions are no more difficult of being understood, whilst on the other hand the advantages are great in classing, dividing, subdividing, and reclassing figures for statistical purposes. If under the present system I wish to compare one article at so many pounds sterling per ton with another as so many rupees per maund, exchange being 2s. 1¼d., I have to reduce by a complicated process of arithmetic both the tons and the maunds to grains and the currency to quarters of a penny. To force the people to adopt your standard would be impolitic, but it would be quite practicable to demand all revenue and customs returns to be made in it, and if necessary to put such a small customs or excise duty on each article as to necessitate the entry being made, and to meet the expense of keeping the record. Records we sadly want, and considering the heavy duties paid by the English merchants I think it disgraceful that the custom-house should not be able to give us quarterly returns within a day or two of the expiry of the time.

We should have daily, weekly, and monthly returns, and until we have we are all working in the dark, and I do believe the great obstacle to our having these is the complication of weights and measures.

Friday, 10th.—Finding nothing more to be got out of the good people of Barsee I sent on my tents to Bhoom, and amused myself by taking a long walk down the river side, and watching the operation of ploughing, 5 pairs of bullock in a row, the driver sitting on the yoke of pair No. 2, face to the tail, indulging in a not unmelodious song. The ground being ploughed had evidently been sown with ground nuts, for the plough turned them up, and they were eagerly gathered by a bevy of women, and boys who fol-

lowed for the purpose. Should one of the bullocks by chance find one he would bring the whole ten to a stop till he picked it up, and ate it. It was amusing to see how quietly the bullocks take a difficulty the nose of the plough came under the root of a mango tree, and the whole yoke of ten simply fell back on their strength of mind, and stopped. Such a difficulty was evidently no unusual occurrence, for the axe was at hand to cut it, and allow the progress of the operation.

It was reported to me that these ground nuts were once largely exported to England, but that now they express the oil here in preference. Before leaving Barsee I fell in with an intelligent Parsee named Ardaseer, who is engaged in furthering Mr. B.'s linseed operations. He said he had difficulty in persuading his principal that it was not idleness that made him behind hand compared with Mr. S. in Sholapoor; the delay for want of a railway was the sole cause.

The G. I. P. Railway Company should certainly make a branch line to Barsee. The country is level; the only difficulty would be the passage of the Seena, and that seems by no means a formidable one. The Nizam's right of toll could be purchased from him, and it would be ready by the time the Bhore Ghaut portion of the line was finished. Barsee possesses many great advantages for a large cotton depôt. All round it the soil is suited for growing cotton. Land is cheap, the country level, stone abundant, and it strikes me that the excessive dryness of climate render it peculiarly well adapted for the two important operations of cotton cleaning and cotton pressing. If I mistake not the process of cleaning cotton is by blowing it up by a draught from below, an operation I should think far more effectual when the cotton is as dry as tinder than when moistened by either the damp atmosphere of Bombay or Manchester, and it must strike the most casual observer that to have the cotton pressed in this dry state would be good guarantee

for its being conveyed to England free from the objectionable black leaf, which is almost entirely owing to the damp of Bombay. Presses in Barsee and iron bands would send the cotton down to Bombay prepared for shipment, and all that would be required would be trustworthy samples to accompany each parcel, and that could be easily managed by having responsible people attached to the screws.

An objection has been made to the introduction of iron bands on the ground that the hammering requisite to secure the rivet would endanger the cotton from the sparks, but this could be easily obviated by a simple arrangement of securing the hoop by a loop and button.

Ardaseer's great grievance was the want of a doctor at Barsee, and the great difficulty in the way of one of the Grant Medical College men establishing himself there is the determination of the Barsee men not to pay for one. That, at least, they think might be done for them.

I have great difficulty in ascertaining the expense of keeping a bullock. It must be very trifling. The invariable reply to a question on the subject is—"Oh! the bullock eats nothing or everything," and I fancy that is really the case. I know that I have frequently observed the Bombay bheestie's bullock when bringing water to my bungalow on Malabar Hill being given a basket of stable refuse which it ate in a very contented manner. I fancy the bullock is an epicure in the sailor's definition of the word; viz, an "old humbug as eats everything."

On Friday evening I started for Bhoom, having sent on my tent in the morning, and now I made up my mind for some rough travelling, for there is a road from Barsee to Koordoo but none from Barsee to Bhoom. Having to pass through the villages of Pimplegaon, Mankessur, and Ashtur, I felt pretty secure of the road, but alas *c'est le premier pas qui coute* they sent me off to Pimplowaddy instead of

Pimpergaon, and so I had a good opportunity of surveying a portion of the country I had not calculated upon. And here let me remark upon the abominable practice of calling so many towns by one name. It is a greater nuisance than the maunds and seers, especially as the names are varied on the map by spelling them differently. Thus we have Pimplegaon, Peepregaon, Pipergaon, Pinchpeepre. The words here show Peepre, Piper, and Pimple being the name of the tree generally spelt peepul. The town of Bhoom derived its name from some huge man, so I was told, who was a cannibal, and had the power of altering his size to suit his convenience, sometimes being very large, and sometimes very small. His name was Raksur. I must say this did not appear to me a satisfactory reason for calling the place Bhoom, but doubtless there was a hidden meaning in it, like £ for pounds and *d.* for pence.

The Mamlutdar and Patel were exceedingly attentive, and called several times to see me, and were accompanied by many of the townspeople. A peon was also placed at my disposal, armed with sword and shield, and I found him most useful. When talking with these men who were really intelligent, it struck me how very few opportunities they had of seeing or hearing anything beyond their own villages, and even then, for want of a proper interpreter much was lost to them of what they did hear, even if they remembered it ; and that a very legitimate and proper mode of impressing anything upon them would be by Government inviting them all annually to a great entertainment at Bombay. What though expense were incurred a well-delivered lecture in their own language on the American Crisis would interest them, or seed could be given to those who took it, and written instructions ; they would talk to each other, compare notes, see samples, and certainly go away with more enlightened ideas than

ever they were likely to get at a place like Bhoon. A reward or an honor conferred on any who showed himself public spirited conferred too in the presence of his fellows would stir up emulation amongst them, and their coming to Bombay would stir up the good people there too, and make them rather ashamed that they had not more to show in the way of fountains and gas and modern evidences of civilization.

At Bhoom I was struck with the offensive nature of the water which happened to remain in the pools of the river, and I found it owing to their steeping hemp in them. A considerable quantity of hemp is prepared here, and the price, Rs. 1½ per maund. What is a maund? here again this interminable question.

1 maund = 13½ seers.
1 seer = 84 Alibaug sicca rupees.

I left Bhoom on Monday early morning for Yeat. There are two roads, one direct through Chicholy and Socta, the other round about through Doorood and Pathrood. I was forced to take the longer one, because the other was not good, and yet upon this, the better of the two, three carts broke and one upset. If this be the better road of the two, what must the other be. At Yeat some delay was incurred in getting my cart mended, but here more than anywhere else do I find dogged passive resistance on the part of these village worthies. The Patel will neither furnish carts, bullocks, nor coolies, and the Mamlutdar has run away, so * * *

I am sorry to say I must draw a broad line here across the record of my experiences. At Bhoom I had entered into the territories of the Nizam, so far I received every civility, honor and attention that could have been paid to a person holding a far higher social position than myself, but at Yeat the atmosphere seemed changed. The Mamlutdar

of Bhoom wrote to the same functionary at Yeat concerning my mission and object, but he thought proper to leave during the night; to run away as the villagers reported it. The Patel of the village, however, was present, and to him I appealed. I showed him Mr. Gray's perwannah. I represented to him through the servant of the Bhoom Mamlutdar that my letters to Colonel Davidson were positive, and my report to him would be represented to the Nizam, but he maintained that in all his territory only one bullock cart could be procured.

Now this is too much with a journey before me liable at any time to be interrupted by the rains. I dare not lay myself open to the delay caused by the fencing of these village functionaries. I therefore sent him a formal notice that from his refusing me the carriage I required I threw on his shoulders the whole responsibility of the termination of my journey, and I should now make the best of my way into the territory of our gracious sovereign Queen Victoria.

In consequence of this, the Patel and two of his friends called on me, and were very submissive, begging me not to report anything to Hyderabad, and they would give me letters to any village, and in fact do anything, and here was the man with paper and ink all ready.

I again represented to him that my intention had been to go to Jaulnah, that the Resident at Hyderabad had written to Major Cowper at Booldana on the subject, and that I was on my way there, and that if my journey was interrupted by his contumacy, the Resident would surely report it to the Nizam. It was all in vain, however, carts he would not or could not give, and therefore I most reluctantly turned towards Kurda, and this I did on Tuesday the 14th of May. To Kurda the road lies through Androod and Lipani. In the former village they reported that there were plenty of carts, and meanwhile this Patel,

who had so positively stated he had none, produced two, thus satisfying me that it was the will and not the power that was wanting.

To Androod, therefore, we went, but really the cart of Yeat was a caution, and delayed us more than one would fancy possible. It was a rude fabric of timber in the rough, the axle was a branch of a tree with the bark on; the wheels were two stones cut round like grindstones about 30 inches in diameter and in thickness 4 inches at the circumference and 12 in the axle, the hole through which the axle went being about 4 inches in diameter.

This ponderous machine was quite heavy enough without the intense friction of the wooden axle in the stone wheel, and it was with such labour that the three pair of bullock dragged it that at Androod we were forced to discard it, and indent for another gharee. As this village must also be included in my report to Colonel Davidson I may as well note the details of my conversations in their integrity. "I want to see the Patel of this village." "The Patel is very sick," reports Mr. Limkur Goodza, as I afterwards ascertained his name to be, holding his head on one side and shutting his eyes hard, representing a man in great pain with his head on a pillow.

I want to see him.—"He is too sick."

Then who attends to his work when he is unable to do so himself?—"Nobody."

He has no writer nor assistant?—"No."

What's your name?—"Limkur."

Any other name?—"*No.*"

Mr. Limkur, I am sorry to say, was disguising the truth. Mr. Limkur had another name to distinguish him from three other Limkurs. The Patel also had an assistant in the shape of a son whom I got hold of. To this son I represented the sure disgrace his father would get into by

refusing me the means of either getting on or back, and so he reported that in Lipani there were plenty of carts. In the meantime he provided 12 coolies who, each taking a portion of the tent from the stone wheeled cart we left it to return to Yeat, duly paid however, and we pursued our way merrily to Lipani, that Oasis in the desert wealthy in carts.

The Indian native though dull in many things is cunning in device, but it is a stupid cunning. Like the ostrich thinking itself unseen when its own head is in the sand, these Lipani worthies thought I would be deceived by the report that by an extraordinary coincidence the four carts I had seen in their village had all their wheels off, and that there were plenty of carts in Kurdee, but in Lipani oh! no, there were no carts there.

Rowjee Limkur, however, the son of the Patel of Androod (another of the 4 Limkurs), had reported to me the existence of carts at Lipani, and he sent Khandoo Ghitty into the village to report upon the fact. I preserve the names in case the conduct of these Patels be thought worth investigating. Khandoo Ghitty reports all the carts broken, and here I may, I think, number this as perhaps the greatest existing obstacle in the way of developing the resources of India. It is seldom indeed that an independent Englishman takes the trouble to penetrate much beyond the coast line of India. The English gentlemen who do visit these out-of-the-way villages are mostly one of two classes. The collector who is armed with authority, and whose orders they dare not resist; the military or civil officer who is under orders to proceed by such a time to such a place. Now of these two classes the Collector should not have, and probably has not, any difficulty; the officer going on duty has difficulty, I have heard of it hundreds of times. His conduct under

the circumstances is very probably what I should have liked to have done myself, viz., argued I *must* go, you *wont* give me carts, I'll *take* them, and prevent me if you dare. To a man whose duty compels him to proceed no other course is open, and who can be surprised, if on this account the breach is not greatly widened between the governing, and governed classes. That it is so I can vouch, for I have seen it done in Guzerat, where bullocks were unable to go, a pair were seized from the field in spite of all the poor owner could say. In vain I remonstrated in my choicest Guzeratee, the leader of my escort said "Sahib, I have charge of you, and it *must* be so. I cannot leave you in the road, and I must be in Ahmedabad by such a day."

My case, however, is a peculiar one. I have no particular duty to fulfil in going to Jaulnah, and therefore I can afford to say, "Refuse me these carts, and refuse them at your peril. I know you have them, and I know you could procure them if you had not, but know this that the orders of the Government are for you to give me every assistance. Your refusing to do so therefore lays you open to serious consequences, besides the displeasure of Government. I am not going to take the law into my own hands by forcibly seizing the property of any of your villagers, thus giving you a handle for declamation in case you feel inclined to denounce the ruling power, but I shall take the more legitimate method of reporting your contumacy to your rulers, and recommending that your villages and the Patels be made public examples of, the latter by being dismissed as unworthy of the position they hold, and that the former by being fined of an amount sufficient to procure and maintain in good order and condition three strong carts and bullocks for the use of travellers and for them only.

No doubt you would much prefer the Sahib to keep his advice and improvements to himself, and eat your khana as your fathers did before you in your own way, but fortunately for civilization and yourselves you are not to have your own way in this respect, and if you cannot behave with propriety you must be taught to do so.

I must here observe that nothing of these complaints in any way refers to the Patels or Mamlutdars of Koordoo, Barsee, or Bhoom. The Mamlutdar of Bhoom was most attentive, and the servant he gave me most civil. His peon accompanied me to Yeat, Androod, and Lipani, and was most particular in explaining to the Patels of these villages the orders of his Government.

At 4 o'clock I left Lipani, taking my tents, for want of carts, on coolies, and made the best of my way across the Ghauts to Mohoree, and about an hour after dark I arrived at the village of Kurda. From the Patel of the village I could procure carts, bullocks, everything; and the change was decidedly pleasant from the treatment I had received at Yeat.

The population of Kurda was in state of excitement from an attack having been made upon it the night previous at 12 o'clock by about 25 men from the hills, who robbed the village, and wounded several of the villagers. A force consisting of about 20 men had gone after the robbers, consisting of the Police Patel, two sowars, 11 ramosees and some villagers, but their success was not known when I left.

Wednesday, 15th.—The Police Patel and the Mamlutdar called this morning on me, and reported that between this and Poona, whether by the direct road or by Ahmednuggur there was no cotton cultivation worth notice. It was grown, but the quantity was very small, that the grain crops were much preferred by the ryots because there

was a ready and a steady sale for grain, and the profit of it was rupees three to one that could be derived from cotton. If the prospects of cotton were so good it was the place of capitalists and speculators to buy it up, and raise the price now so as to stimulate the growth of the next year, and in my opinion the Mamlutdar was perfectly right. High prices alone will stimulate production effectually, and as twelve months at least are required for this, Manchester, if she wishes to avoid a cotton famine, must raise the price of cotton to a much higher level than it now occupies, and take care that there is always 12 months' stock on hand.

The Mamlutdar complained much of the transit duties or octroi levied by the Nizam on the detached villages he held, such as Ashteh, a report of which he had duly made to the Government.

Finding that no good practical result would probably follow my further course through the district between this and Poona, I resolved to strike down through Andmuz and Kurmulla and join the line at Joor, and so return to Bombay.

Before leaving Kurda, a respectable native called and brought a schoolmaster at whose request I visited the Marathee school in which there were about 90 scholars. One read poetry to me or rather sang it, another read a prose essay on the greatness of England. Several maps were shown me made by the scholars, and also a globe. In geography they seemed tolerably well up though rather behind hand as to current politics, as one half naked urchin maintained that the Pope was ruler of Italy. After geography I was asked to examine them in mathematics. One of them found for me the centre of a circle in the orthodox manner, and another most fluently demonstrated the property of the square of the hypothenuse of a right-angled triangle as well as Euclid himself could

have done. Leaving Kurda in the afternoon I arrived at night at Soneghaum and left it again next morning early.

Thursday, 16th.—Reached Sailgham at breakfast time Here I wrote to Mr. Lord, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, my reasons for discontinuing my journey, and had an interview with the Patel, a very intelligent man. He seemed very much interested in what I told him about cotton, and promised to send to Barsee for some of the American seed. He told me that the cotton was not cleaned in the cultivator's own houses, but was sent as capoos to Sonarry, where about 300 women were employed cleaning it, Sonarry being a village in the English possession, though completely surrounded by the territory of the Nizam. In the afternoon therefore I went off to Sonary, and arrived at night. The road, I need hardly say, was unworthy of the name. It was a track, but so utterly neglected that if the bullocks could get into a ploughed field the travelling over it was preferable. In this, however, this individual road was not singular.

Friday morning, 17th.—The sun rose on Sonary, thermometer 100° I visited the village, and found that the Patel knew little or nothing.

Q.—They clean cotton here ?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Are they cleaning it now ?

A.—No.

Q.—Why ?

A.—It is all cleaned.

Q.—Have you much cotton here ?

A.—Oh ! a great deal.

Q.—How much ?

A.—Many maunds.

Q.—How many cart-loads ?

A.—About 800.

Q.—What becomes of it?

A.—It goes to Barsee.

Q.—But Joor is a railway station far nearer than Barsee, why don't you send it there? Is there no road?

A.—Oh, yes.

Q.—Then why don't you send it?

A.—The Bunneah sends it there. I don't know.

So I went into the village to see the Bunneah.

Q.—Where do you keep the cotton in this village?

Bunneah.—There it is (pointing to about 20 bags).

Q.—But there are only about 20 dokras.

A.—Yes, that is all.

Q.—The Patel said there was enough for 800 carts.

A.—Did he? Ah! he did not know.

Patel.—Ah! I did not know. That is all the cotton, and it does not belong to the Bunneah, it belongs to Luckmijee Sewjee. There is Luckmijee Sewjee's man.

Q.—Are you Luckmijee Sewjee's man?

A.—No, I am not Luckmijee Sewjee's man.

Q.—What is the size of the place?

A.—Two miles in diameter.

Q.—Is it quite surrounded by the Nizam's territory?

A.—Yes, entirely.

Q.—Does he levy any duty from you?

A.—Yes, the Mogul takes 10 annas for every cart that passes Donegaum.

Q.—What is the price you pay the cultivator for his cotton?

A.—18 seers of kapoos for 1 Rupee.

Q.—How much clean cotton does that produce?

A.—5 seers cotton, 13 seers seed.

Q.—How much do you pay for cleaning it?

A.—2 annas for 12 seers.

Q.—Do you sell the seed?

A.—Yes.
Q.—What do you get for it ?
A.—1 anna for 6 seers.
Q.—What is the price of cleaned cotton ?
A.—Rs. 26 per pulla.
Q.—What is a pulla ?
A.—10 maunds.
Q.—Why, in Barsee a pulla is 3 maunds ?
A.—Ah ! yes, but here it is 10 maunds.
Q.—Well, what is a maund ?
A.—12 seers.
Q.—Why, in Barsee it is 40 seers ?
A.—Ah ! yes, but here it is 12 seers.
Q.—Then, what is a seer ?
A.—Rupees 80.
Q.—Company's Rupees ?
A.—Yes.
Q.—What is carriage to Barsee ?
A.—2 Rs. per cart of 4 pullas, 10 annas Mogul's duty.

From Sonary I returned through Sareh to Jewoor or Joor, and thence took the rail to Bombay viâ Poona.

Now, looking back upon this six weeks' trip I shall briefly summarise the obstacles which appear to clog the cotton trade and its development in India.

1. Bad roads, or rather no roads at all.
2. Transit dues.
3. The ignorance and apathy of the native planters and village authorities.

4. The bar that effectually prevents the visits of Europeans to these districts, or indeed of any one to whom time is of value, and who alone could by their advice or assistance enlighten them.

5. The natural distrust existing between the ryot and the Sahib owing to the course which the latter is so often compelled to resort to in forcibly taking carts, &c. arising from the obduracy of the village Patels.

6. The great expense that one is put to if he intends to forego all the above inconveniences, not so much in providing for his wants as in taking precautions against wants which he has any reason to suppose may arise.

7. The impossibility under these circumstances for a European to have supervision over his own property.

8. The want of a uniformity of weights and measures.

Independently of the obstacles met with in the cotton districts, in Bombay itself there are many serious ones in the way of the development of the trade. The overcrowded state of that part appropriated to business purposes, and the consequently offensive nature of the atmosphere is an evil of no small magnitude, there is also a serious want of efficient draining, lighting, and police, entailing sickness, robbery, and blocking up the avenues to the bunders, and indeed the very streets themselves.

On every one of these points pages might be written if there was any prospect of their accomplishing the desired end, but the evils are so vast that few would like to undertake the task of remedying them. Many years ago the state of India in this and in other respects was compared by a collector whom I had the pleasure of meeting in Kaira, near Ahmedabad, to a stream of water running over a deep mud bed. Let the mud alone, he said, the water runs over it tolerably pure, but if you attempt to reform it, you will raise such a mass of corruption, preju-

dice, and opposition as to make you regret your energy.

This may be the case, but not the less on that account is there a strong necessity for having the mud removed, and in my opinion the way to begin is at our own doors. Now considering that a trip from Dhollera occupies eight days, is it not disgraceful that boats should have to lie idle for four times that period. That delay arises from mismanagement at the bunders. It takes nine men to pull a rope to raise one bale from the boat, and these men impede the traffic of the bunder. Bullocks and their carts will block up any space, and should not be tolerated on a bunder, nor should such a place ever be used as a storage ground as it now is.

The whole system on which the cotton trade is carried on in Bombay requires revising as it is most inconvenient in its nature and unsatisfactory in its results. Under it there is an absence of promptitude and accuracy, and to such an extent as to seriously impede its free action or development. Under the present system, supposing a merchant receives an order from Manchester for 4000 bales of fair Omrawuttee cotton, let us see how it works. In order first to ascertain whether it can be procured at his limit, he has to take into account cost, freight, and exchange, he bargains for all three. Can he then go into the market, and buy that quantity? Certainly not, but his broker takes round a contract, and receives from twenty to thirty men their signatures for fifty to two hundred bales each. Is any sample shown? No, the only stipulation "is Omrawuttee cotton to be selected." Then begins the fight. No. 1 tells you his cotton is ready, and you go to Colaba to select it. He refuses to show it, and says he prefers your coming at noon or at sunrise. He knows that at these times discolor or stain is not so perceptible. You refuse. A wrangle takes place, and you are forced to give in. Next morning at daylight you go down with no better success. Either the

merchant has not come, or if he has, he shows you some wretched lot, which consists of the rejected bales of some other firm. After examining perhaps 100 bales you get three. In despair you go to another dealer who signed your contract. He shows you Parsee cotton fair enough in color, but entirely wanting in the qualifications of Omrawuttee and not two bags alike. You tell him this is not Omrawuttee. He knows that well enough, but he maintains it is, but does not insist on your taking it. Come and see another lot he says. From this you get perhaps one bale out of fifty, and so day after day is your temper tried, and your time wasted till the mail arrives, bringing news of an advance. Then the game goes on faster. These A. B. C. and Co. sell their cotton to somebody else at a higher rate, and say to you, you must take what they show you or none. You send them a lawyer's notice, and then there is a talk of combination never to sell to you again. Meanwhile they all at once call on you to come and take delivery. It is impossible to examine cotton from so many at once, and thus they raise a plea that they offered you cotton and you would not take it, and sometimes carry their effrontery so far as to send you a lawyer's notice that if you don't take delivery they will cancel the contract. The legitimate remedy is not open to you, viz., to buy in the open market on their account and charge them with damages, because you have on your list nearly all the Omrawuttee dealers' names, and the rest will treat you on principle in a similar manner to prove that the cotton which ultimately you are compelled to take is no better than what you refused from the original sellers.

Owing to all this delay you have been unable to fulfil your engagements of freight and exchange, in consequence of which the other side has the option of making you pay if rates have fallen, or cancelling your contract if the reverse is the case.

The process of marking cotton is defective and unsatisfactory in the extreme. The bulk of the cotton that comes to Bombay is in small bags varying in weight from one to two hundredweight, and there is not one European merchant in Bombay who will not bear me out in protesting against a system that demands his personal attendance in the glare of an Indian sun to have his eyes probably permanently injured with the reflection of the white cotton and the small fine dust of the Cotton Green, whilst a sample is drawn for every one of these little bags, undergoing at the same time the mortification of knowing that what is being shown to him is not the cotton that he bargained for.

Besides all this, as the place where you sit cannot command a view of all the cotton bales, you have no guarantee that the bale you approve of is stamped, nor have you any guarantee that your stamped bales are those weighed over you, nor that this weight is a true weight. And here I would digress for a minute to give as an example of the ignorance or apathy of the men who work amongst the cotton, that they will not make use of the simple expedient of the catchweight, but for every bale put into the scale, the ponderous 56 lbs. weights are removed off and on to the scale board, and I am strongly inclined to believe it is intentional. Time being no object to them, it precludes the possibility of your employing trustworthy or highly paid men to superintend the operation.

See then at last your cotton brought into the screws. Here matters are no better. The dust, the noise, the confusion are so great that it is against your conscience to ask a respectable clerk to remain all day there superintending the process. It is impossible for you to do it yourself, and as a general rule if you want more than one press, you receive another in a different part of the building, thus rendering

supervision impossible. But even suppose the cotton you approve of really is pressed, you or your confidential man see it go into the press, but who sees the bale come out, for all you know another man may be pressing in the very next screw inferior cotton, and putting your mark on it, taking yours. I say it may be for all you know, and your only guarantee that it is not so is the native workman. Nor is the necessity of supervision over then. On the way from the screw buildings to the boat, from the shore to the ship, there are opportunities in abundance for substitution and as there supervision is impossible, no doubt it takes place to a considerable extent. Who amongst the merchants of Bombay cannot in his own experience recal many instances in which his muccadum has stated positively to so many boats having been sent to such and such a ship the previous day, when the captain has just left his office having come to complain that within the hour when he left his ship not one boat was alongside. This is no uncommon incident, then the question naturally suggests itself—Where is the cotton all this time?

Now the gist of the whole may be summed up in very few words. From first to last you are at the mercy of the muccadum's men, and these men are not of a class who would think it wrong to take a bribe. Now all this is most unsatisfactory, and we see the fruits of it in innumerable cases.

How many Bombay merchants would dare to execute a cotton order for Manchester for fair cotton, good fair cotton, or upon any Liverpool classification? How many would sell cotton in Liverpool to arrive guaranteeing the quality, although he had seen every bale with his own eyes. I question if there is one, and how many have smarted under the practical lesson of having a shipment thrown on their hands because they fondly hoped that what arrived

in Liverpool would be what had been shown them on the Cotton Green.

Now these are great evils, and stand as a heavy clog upon the development of trade in Bombay. Nothing will mitigate it but an entire re-modelling of the whole system, for it is vicious from beginning to end, and I do not think that the introduction of a new one would be a difficult matter. Difficult however, or not, it must be introduced, and I feel confident the mercantile community here will have energy enough to do it. The leading feature of it must be Responsibility.

The formation of respectable companies to undertake the management of the different processes through which cotton passes, these companies being responsible for the faithful performance of their duties.

The principal part of the process where reform is needed is that connected with the pressing of the bales. This operation should be undertaken entirely by a company, and this company should be responsible for the proper performance of it. A trustworthy man placed at each press to see that no underhand work takes place, and that, as the cotton is placed in the screw box, a true and faithful sample is taken from it, would be much towards the remedying of what we complain of, and if exact records were kept in the press books of each bale and by whom the process was superintended, this would be all that was requisite to fix responsibility upon the people's shoulders should it be found on the vessel's arrival in England that the cotton was not equal to sample.

The simple process of the Press Companies using stamped gunnies and numbering the bales would ensure accurate recognition of property, and put an effectual stop to all tricks of substitution.

Were this system introduced, it would be easy to abolish

the present inconvenient mode adopted for purchasing, and substitute purchase by sample.

A contract made for so many candies of cotton as per sample, and in good order, could not well be misunderstood. The cotton would be received by the screw company, and any bale, found decidedly inferior, rejected, and if the samples drawn by the company were compared with those exhibited by the dealer and on which the contract was made, any dispute or difficulty could be settled by arbitration. As the cotton trade of India is likely to be much more extended than it ever was before, the present lax system in force will not be tolerated, for it is notorious that one great reason for the disfavor in which Surats are held in Manchester consists in the fact that no confidence whatever can be placed in the evenness in which a lot runs. Not only are there many descriptions of cotton in one lot, but often in one bale; and this cannot be avoided when several small bags are pressed together to make one bale, and the most careful supervision that a merchant can establish is insufficient to ensure regularity.

As an illustration I shall mention a fact which came under my own notice. A consignment of cotton came to the Bombay Government from their Dharwar sawgins, carefully packed and sorted according to quality,

No. 1 being good clean cotton.

No. 2 inferior.

No. 3 the refuse of the other two, three of the small bags in which it came made one bale. During the process of pressing, the men were indiscriminately putting into the presses cotton of the three descriptions, the intelligent and conscientious native whom Government appointed and paid to superintend the operation being fast asleep down below on the cotton bales!

Such a thing would seldom occur were the screw super-

intendent made responsible for it, and it could be traced by reference to the screw books who had the superintendence of that individual bale.

The great trouble and annoyance which is experienced by the irregularity of the boatmen, who prefer skulking in some unobserved place to making the best of their way to the ship, thus leading to unpleasantness between the ship and the shippers, could be greatly lessened by a simple system of boat notes strictly adhered to; the boat's number, the time of its leaving the bunder and that if its arrival at the ship being noted, and the record preserved in a regular book. Any irregularity could be at once traced, for really in this one matter lies the root of all the evil of the cotton trade,—the want of power to trace an irregularity to its foundation. Another great benefit that would be derived from such a system would be the protection afforded to receivers of consignments, who could, by reference to the screw samples, ascertain the quality of what he was called upon to advance money for, and throw great light on the transactions of unprincipled men, who for their own base purposes are found often pressing refuse that is never meant to be sold. The instance of the wool frauds is fresh in the recollection of most of the mercantile community, and I verily believe that under such a system we should hear of fewer ship burnings than we were in the habit of doing.

I remember going with a friend through the Colaba cotton screws some years ago, and remarking one press at work on some refuse cotton which could never be intended for transmission to a legitimate market, as its value would not pay the freight. I called the attention of the screw manager to it at the time, but he said the men engaged the screw, and were at liberty to do as they liked, so long as they paid the hire it was none of his business. I could not

convince him that it was, but I took the precaution of noting in my pocket book the mark of the bales, the ship to which they purposed sending it, and the name of the party who was engaged upon it.

Was it merely a singular coincidence that the ship caught fire before she left the harbour, for she did burst into flames at the middle ground. It may have been, but I cannot help thinking the two facts had a closer connection than others seemed willing to allow.

The sailors were of course all brought to, and examined at the police office, but as usual nothing was elicited from them. While the investigation was going on I communicated with the Police Magistrate, and gave him the memorandum I had taken, also to the consignees of the cotton and to the underwriters who had insured it, but I never heard of the matter having been investigated as it should have been done.

Now such a thing as this could not occur without detection were there responsible and respectable superintendents to each screw, and reference could be subsequently made to the samples and history of each one of its transactions.

On the subject of the poverty of the Government which is the constant excuse for refusing to undertake any work of utility, it appears to me that a most erroneous impression prevails. Supposing the Earl of Derby were to make out his annual balance sheet, I fear he would make but a poor show of wealth if he omitted in the statement to put at the credit of the account, the item "value

of landed, property." And yet this is what the Indian Government constantly do. Were they to sell a portion of their land the money so raised might with great propriety be devoted to the improvement of the rest.

The portion at present most valuable is that adjoining the harbours of its sea coast and its great communications such as rivers or railroads. If such land were sold, with the one proviso that good roads be made through it so as to preserve the communication with the coast, the adjoining parcels of land would in their turn become valuable, and in course of time the whole country would come to be opened up, independently of the great benefit which would accrue to the country by the establishment of a regular body of landed proprietors. We may be quite certain that the peaceable possession of their property would be the best guarantee for their loyalty, and secure their attachment in the case of foreign invasion. If the vast sums were invested in the soil which are now buried in it, we should see all questions of improving the cultivation receive more attention than they now do, and the vexed question of admitting intelligent natives into positions of trust if not actually allowing them to have a voice in the Government itself would be shorn of more than half its difficulties. With the privilege of being a landholder beyond a certain acre-age, might be coupled certain responsibilities, magisterial functions and the obligation of supporting a corresponding number of armed retainers liable to be called out for the suppression of internal and foreign aggression; and so long as the country was fairly governed, and these men had themselves a voice in imposing their own burdens whilst rebellion or treason would be visited by confiscation, their full co-operation might be calculated upon.

This is not a mere abstract question now. The state of the Indian exchequer positively demands it, and consi-

dering the precarious state of the revenue derived from opium, it is one that the English people must take up and examine for themselves; they must be prepared to grant loans of great magnitude, or part with the Indian Empire altogether.

It cannot however be desnied that against this there is one formidable objection. A sale of land at the present time would be too great a sacrifice—for I do not think it would realize anything approaching its intrinsic value. For many years the Government have been acting upon a fixed principle of improving the value of their property, and by no means the least important step taken was the fixing the land revenue at a certain rate for a period of years. Under this fostering influence the land has wonderfully increased in value, and immense tracts are now brought into cultivation, which formerly were unoccupied. The full benefit of these measures will however not be felt until the expiry of the term above alluded to, and therefore to sell land now would be wilfully to give up the advantages for which already serious concessions of revenue have been made.

I can compare it to a joint-stock company, which should make a rule that for twenty years no dividends should be paid, but all profits go to increase the buildings, machinery, and appliances.

The market value of such shares would be at a discount because for years there had been no dividend, and for years to come there would be none.

The real value of such shares would only be apparent when they were allowed to be remunerative, and that will be the case when the expiry of the present term of land tax allows Government to fix a new one. In the meantime, whilst the whole country is so rapidly improving in value, the true policy of Government would be to take

loans of great magnitude from the English people for investment in roads and public works, and this too on a grand and comprehensive scale. The sums so borrowed would repay themselves over and over again, and were such a course taken, we should hear no more of coolie emigration. Is it not lamentable to see in a country like this valuable tracts of lands waste for want of population, and at the same time the people of the country being sent away to cultivate the properties of other nations? In all this, however, the fault does not lie with the Indian Government but with that of England, for whilst England disclaims all liability for the Indian debt she prohibits her from a privilege open to any foreign nation, viz., that of placing her loans on the Stock Exchange, without special Acts of Parliament, and all the English financiers sent out repudiate the system of loans.

At present Government hold the double position of rulers and landlords. In this position their duties are not difficult to define, but they are so important that the neglect of them involves responsibilities that can hardly be over-rated.

One of the principal duties this double position entails upon them is to see that every one of their subjects has sufficient food. One death from starvation is a disgrace to a legislature; political economy is beyond the power as it is beyond the province of the day labourer. "My pay," he argues, "is barely sufficient to provide for my daily food, and for this pay I give the whole of my time and the sweat of my brow, out of it I cannot lay by a store for the future. It is for you therefore who benefit by my labour to see that there is always work for me, and that there is food sufficient obtainable for the wages I earn." This tacit contract has not been carried out during this last season. There was no food for the people, and if there were, the

labourer's pittance was altogether inadequate to purchase it. There was therefore a grievous fault somewhere; the question is at whose door can you lay it? This is not so easily answered. I do not lay it at the door of the collectors of the several districts, nor can I blame the heads of departments; the evil I think lies in the system upon which the Government of the country is carried on. This system, so far as I can learn, is based upon the principle that nothing shall be done without orders, and that any work countenanced by a subordinate, entailing an outlay of money, however trifling, lays him open to the penalty of having the amount cut from his own pay. Now in the position of landlords of the country, there are hundreds aye thousands and tens of thousands of trifling matters of this kind, upon which the expensive machinery of Government is brought to bear, multiplying records and references with no adequate returns excepting the avoidance of establishing a dangerous precedent. Now for the preserving this vicious system, only two valid excuses can be given. Let me suppose a case. £500 would bridge this water course, and render the road available to a large extra district. The collector cannot sanction it without a reference to Government. Government have other and more important duties to attend to, and it is neglected. It is not of so very much consequence, it can wait.

For want of a nail the shoe was lost; we all know the tale. The nail was one of these matters of minor consequence, and perhaps the consequences might be similarly traced from the want of a bridge to the famine of a district.

The two excuses I allude to are—Government have no money to spare, or we cannot trust such an outlay to your discretion.

If the former is the case, the question should be treated as England did with Irish encumbered estates, and say—

With such an estate and such a revenue, your having no money is disgraceful, and we must sell part of your estate and redeem the rest, but in future if there is a nail wanted in the shoe, it shall not remain unsupplied for want of funds.

With regard to the other question, the utter withholding of discretionary power is an insult to gentlemen who represent you. If you think them too ignorant or injudicious to guide the outlay of such moderate sums in their various collectorates, or so dishonest as to render it dangerous to give them so much discretion, they are not fit for the position you have given them, but you know that the reverse is the fact, and that a more honorable and judicious set of men does not exist. I say then, give them large discretion, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred you will have no cause to regret it. In the case of the hundredth, if you find want of judgment displayed, put the offender into a less prominent position, but do not punish the whole country for the sins of one.

Having started with the remark that it is the duty of Government to find that every one has food if he work for it, there should always be on hand extensive Government works, and the wages obtainable on them should be sufficient for food and necessaries for the labourer. With this safety valve for him all private enterprise would have to employ labour at a higher rate than this minimum standard, and thus give the labourer a little for the luxuries of life. It is a mistake to suppose that this is money wasted, it is not, it is money circulated, and in proportion as the money circulates so is the country benefited. Again a day-labourer should be paid by the day. I understand that the custom is to pay six weeks in arrears. this is a vicious system, for it entails the principle either that the labourer has funds in hand (not very probable) or he must resort to the village money lender and commence,

as he surely will end, a hopeless debtor, for taking it for granted that the wages are just enough for his existence, it follows that the wages minus the interest are not enough for that purpose, and if this element is taken into calculation in estimating the daily pay, then it is a fact that on all the labour of the country a heavy per-centage is paid to support the village usurer.

On the railway works at the Bhore Ghaut the wages of the men amount to, I believe, four annas each; skilled labour is very highly paid. The wages paid by Government officers are about two annas, and they advance as they approach the railway works. Now these railway workers having accumulated pay go home to spend their Hooli holidays in their own villages, will not the money so spent directly or indirectly benefit the whole village, and will not the presence of these men with money in their possession stir up the emulation of the whole village to be equal to them.

It will be long before the Indian Government can conscientiously say we have no work for the people, whilst there is actually no road between such places as Poona and Belgaum, and any officer going on duty from the one place to the other has often no means of crossing the rivers, but by swimming or extemporising a boat out of a wicker basket or a sugar pan.

These are matters, however, that have been so often brought to the notice of the public that I shall not further allude to them. I shall only conclude by observing that before this year is out, the probability is that the necessity of action will be forced upon the attention of the people of England in a manner they little anticipate, and their neglect will be brought home to them much in the same way as one would regret having neglected his fire-engine, when his house was burning and the hose burst.

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